

# Ford-Bush ticket urged on GOP

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When President Ford nominated George Bush to be director of the Central Intelligence Agency last November, he told the Senate, "I will not consider him as my running mate in 1976" if the Senate confirmed him.

Despite this pledge, however, many Republican leaders across the nation are beginning to say that a Gerald Ford-George Bush Republican ticket is the "most logical" if Mr. Ford is nominated in Kansas City.

Monitor soundings across the nation and particularly in the primary states show:

- Many GOP chieftains — at least, those who are supporting the President, and most of them are — now see the need for Mr. Ford's running mate to be "a moderate and a Southerner" in order to beat the man who seems most likely to be the Democratic nominee, Jimmy Carter.

- In addition, many leaders do not feel that Mr. Bush's position of not being available for the vice-presidency — which he took when he was confirmed as CIA director — would rule him out of taking the No. 2 spot.

Said a Midwest governor: "This is the vice-



By a staff photographer

## Bush: 'logical,' but possible?

presidency we are talking about. Bush could not refuse a presidential draft. His skirts are clean as long as he remains nonpolitical at the CIA and does not seek the No. 2 post."

But some leaders question whether Mr. Bush could in fact be chosen by Mr. Ford.

In a letter to Sen. John Stennis (D) of Mississippi Dec. 18, 1975, Mr. Ford cited the nation's "immediate intelligence needs" as requiring continuity in CIA leadership. Thus, Mr. Ford said, if Mr. Bush was confirmed by the Senate, "I will not consider him as my vice-presidential running mate" in 1976.

Sen. Robert Taft (R) of Ohio, member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, told this newspaper: "I think it would be pretty difficult [for Mr. Ford] to get away from it [the commitment]. There would be some screaming from a lot of people — with [Sen. Henry M.] Jackson, who got the commitment from Bush — leading the charge. I also doubt if George would countenance it."

However, many GOP leaders see political advantages in a Ford-Bush ticket, nonetheless.

There is also some talk among the leaders of John B. Connally in the running-mate slot. But fellow-Texan Bush is being given the preference because many wonder how the public might view the placement of Mr. Connally on the ticket.

Many said what one Midwestern leader had to say: "Connally, despite his acquittal [on charges of influence-peddling], may be tainted in the minds of many voters. In the wake of Watergate, Connally might drag down the ticket."